

## CLAIMS

### Claims 1-40 (Canceled)

Claim 41 (Currently Amended): A slicing machine for slicing food products ~~[[ (1) ]]~~, in particular blocks of sausage, meat or cheese, having comprising a rotating cutting blade ~~[[ (2) ]]~~, which is mounted so as to be displaceable parallel to ~~its axis of rotation~~ (3) a rotation axis of the cutting blade, characterised in that it comprises and a counterweight ~~[[ (4) ]]~~, which ~~may be displaced~~ is axially displaced in the opposite direction from the cutting blade ~~[[ (2) ]]~~.

Claim 42 (Canceled):

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The slicing machine according to ~~any one of the preceding of~~ claim[[s]] 41, characterised in that wherein displacement of the cutting blade, ~~(2) and/or of the counterweight, or both~~ [[ (4) ]] takes place independently of ~~[[the]]~~ a rotational speed of the cutting blade.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The slicing machine according to ~~any one of the preceding of~~ claim[[s]] 43, characterised in that ~~the cutting blade further~~ compris[[es]]ing a drive shaft ~~[[ (5) ]]~~, wherein and in that the cutting blade, ~~(2) and/or the counterweight, or both~~ (4) is(are) is mounted so as to be displaceable along the drive shaft ~~[[ (5) ]]~~.

Claim 45 - 49 (Canceled):

Claim 50 (Currently Amended): A method for axial displacement of a cutting blade~~[[s]]~~ during operation of a slicing machine, comprising the steps of axially displacing characterised in that a counterweight ~~[[ (4) ]]~~ on a drive shaft ~~[[ (5) ]]~~ of the cutting blade ~~is displaced~~ in ~~[[the]]~~ an opposite direction from the cutting blade ~~[[ (2) ]]~~.

Claim 51 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The method according to of claim 50, characteri~~[[s]]~~zed in that displacement wherein the displacing step, the displacement of the counterweight and the cutting blade are achieved ~~is effected~~ synchronously.

Claim 52 (Currently Amended):     ~~[[A]] The method according to~~ of claim 50,  
~~characterised in that wherein~~ displacement of the cutting blade, ~~(2) and of the~~  
~~counterweight, or both~~ [[4)]] ~~is effected~~ achieved by a spindle drive ~~(6).~~

Claim 53 (Currently Amended):     A method of using at least one ~~Use of~~  
counterweight~~[[s]]~~ in a slicing machine comprising the steps of ~~(4) displaceably~~  
axially displacing the at least one counterweight in the opposite direction from a  
cutting blade ~~[[2)]]~~ to stabil~~[[s]]ze~~ the running of the cutting blade ~~[[2)]]~~ of ~~[[a]]~~ the  
slicing machine, ~~which wherein the cutting blade includes an axis of rotation, and the~~  
cutting blade, the counterweight, or both is mounted so as to be displaceable parallel  
to ~~[[its]]~~ the axis of rotation ~~[[3)]]~~.

Claim 54 (Currently Amended):     The method of ~~Use according to~~ claim 53,  
~~characterised in that wherein the step of axially displacing the at least one~~  
counterweight compensates for forces, and/or moments, or both arising during  
displacement of the blade ~~are compensated.~~

Claim 55 (Currently Amended):     The method of claim 53 ~~Use according to claim 13 or~~  
~~claim 14, characterised in that the~~ further comprising the step of adjusting a zero  
~~point may be adjusted~~ by axial displacement of the cutting blade ~~[[2)]]~~ of ~~[[a]]~~ the  
slicing machine.

Claim 56 (Currently Amended):     The method ~~Use according to~~ claim 53, ~~characterised~~  
~~in that the~~ further comprising the step of measuring a torque produced by a ~~of the~~  
drive of the cutting blade during ~~is measured during~~ displacement thereof.

Claim 57 – 67 (Canceled):

Claim 68 (Currently Amended):     The slicing machine ~~A device according to~~ of claim 41,  
~~characterised in that wherein~~ adjustment of ~~[[the]]~~ a cutting gap is ~~effected when is~~  
achieved while the cutting blade is stationary or rotating.

Claim 69 (Currently Amended):     The slicing machine ~~A device according to~~ of claim 41,  
~~characterised in that the~~ wherein an axial position of the cutting blade is not

substantially changed after ~~[[it]]~~ the cutting blade has come into contact with ~~[[the]]~~  
an adjusting limit stop.

Claim 70 - 75 (Canceled):

Claim 76 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 41, wherein the counterweight is axially displaced relative to a feedback controlled drive shaft.

Claim 77 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 76, wherein the cutting blade is axially displaceable along the drive shaft in the same or opposite direction of the counterweight.

Claim 78 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 41, wherein the cutting blade is a circular blade, a helical blade, or a crescent shaped blade.

Claim 79 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 78, wherein the cutting blade is a crescent shaped blade.

Claim 80 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 78, wherein the displacement of the cutting blade, the counterweight, or both is achieved by a spindle arranged within the drive shaft, the spindle including a feedback-controlled drive that interacts with a thread of at least one sleeve, which is connected with the cutting blade, the counterweight, or both, for independent movement thereof.

Claim 81 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 41, wherein the displacement of the cutting blade, the counterweight, or both is achieved by a spindle arranged within the drive shaft, the spindle including a feedback-controlled drive that interacts with a thread of at least one sleeve, which is connected with the cutting blade, the counterweight, or both, for independent movement thereof.

Claim 82 (New):       The slicing machine of claim 78, wherein the drive shaft is driven by a toothed belt wheel, which interacts with the feedback-controlled drive; and wherein the counterweight is mounted non-rotationally, but axially displaceably on one or more bushes on the drive shaft, the drive shaft including a spindle, which is connected by way of a toothed belt wheel to the feedback-controlled drive.